# Opening Cases

Opening a bankruptcy case electronically is much like opening it conventionally, but with some important differences. Attorneys are still responsible for advising their clients and preparing documents, but those documents are submitted in a different form. One big change is that attorneys prepare the **Debtor Information File** formerly prepared by the Court's case administrators. The debtor's signature, formerly on the petition itself, is now on a separate page which is scanned and converted to PDF as part of the filing.

Open bankrutpcy cases by uploading the following files:

✓ the petition, statements, and schedules in one PDF file

✓ the matrix as a text (.txt) file

✓ the debtor's **Signature Declaration Page**, scanned and saved as a PDF file

✓ the plan, if applicable, as a PDF file

✓ the **Debtor Information File** as a data (.dat) file

✓ the filing fee charged to a credit card account.

This section covers creating and saving the **Debtor Information File** and uploading all of the files. Attorneys may create the petition, schedules, and matrix on the software of their choice, as long as it creates files the Court can use. The Court neither requires nor recommends any petition-creating software, and cannot answer any technical questions regarding privately made software.
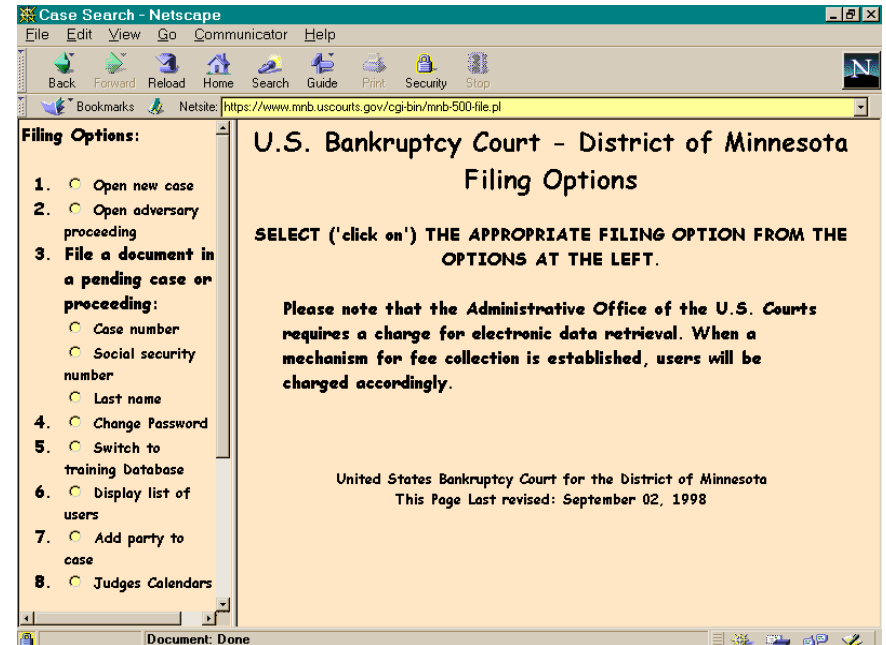
1. Click **Case Filing** from the home page, and log on as usual.

2. Select option 1, **Open new case**.

1. From the drop-down menu on item 1, select the bankruptcy chapter. **Note:** Involuntary petitions cannot be filed electronically.

2. Click item 2, **Complete debtor information pages**, to prepare the debtor information file.

3. After the debtor information file has been completed, click item 3, **Send information to the Court**, to open the case.

1. Complete the required statistical information using the drop-down menus.

2. Click **Next** to proceed.

1. Complete the personal information for the debtor. The **Generation** field is a drop-down menu for "Junior, Senior," etc.

2. For a business name, enter the complete name in the last name field.

3. In a joint case, an additional screen displays for the joint debtor information.

1. If the debtor is known by an additional name, add those names by clicking the **Add Alias** button. Use the drop-down menu to specify the type of additional name (a.k.a., d.b.a., etc.).

2. Click **Next** to return to the debtor information page. There is no limit to the number of additional names you may enter.

Save Data to File

This page will create a directory and save information to a file in that directory.
The names below may be changed if desired.
Only one directory level may be specified.

Directory name: `c:\mnb_data`

File name (do not change the extension .dat) `99-11-5-13-3-43.dat`

Clicking the 'Save to File' button will save the data to the specified directory and filename and close this program

[Save to Directory/File]

Clicking the Exit button will end data input with no other action.

[Exit]

United States Bankruptcy Court
District of Minnesota
Attorney: Training Class

TRAINING DATABASE

Requirements for electronically filing complete
Chapter 13 Petition

I. Select the Debtor Information File (FileName.dat):
`C:\ERS\deisher13.dat` [Browse...]

II. Include the following (in the order shown) in the Voluntary Petition PDF File:
1. Official Form 1 Voluntary Petition
2. Form 6 - Summary of Schedules
3. Form 6 - Schedules A-J
4. Form 6 - Declaration Concerning Debtor(s)' Schedules
5. Form 7 - Statement of Financial Affairs
6. Local Form 1007-1 - Statement of Compensation by Attorney for Debtor(s)

1. The case opening file is saved to your personal computer for later submission to open a case.

2. Enter the directory of your choice, or use the default directory, **c:\mnb_data**.

3. Use the last name of the debtor for the file name, as long as you leave the **.dat** extension.

4. Click **Save to Directory/File** to save the file and close the program.
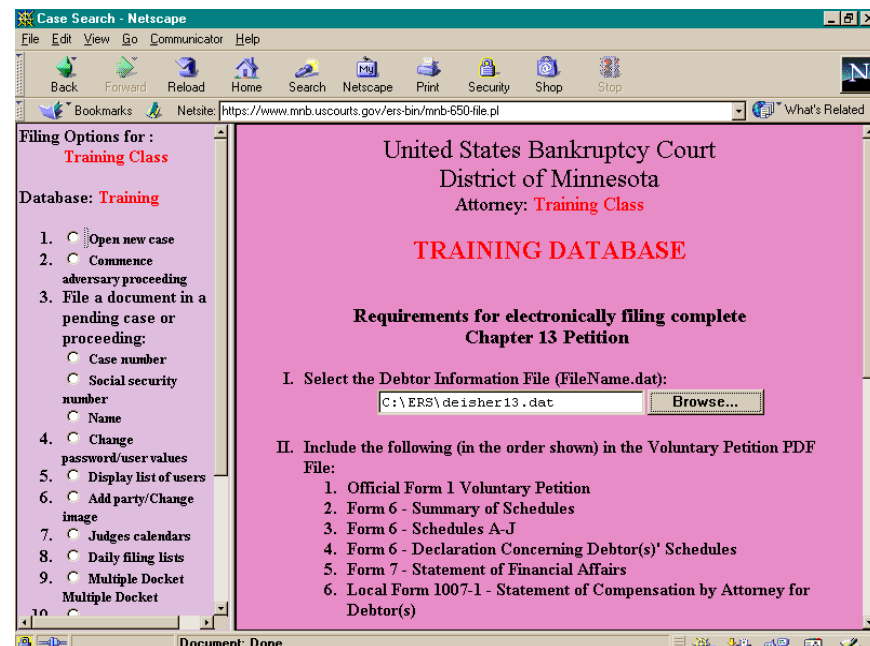
1. The first field is for the **Debtor information file** just completed (or completed earlier).

2. The file *must* have the extension ***.dat** no matter where you have saved it nor what name it has.

1. The next field is for the voluntary petition, statements, and schedules, in one single PDF file.

2. Add the debtor's **Signature Declaration Page**.

3. The list of creditors is added in text format.

4. The final field is for the chapter 13 plan, if applicable, in PDF format.

5. Click **Submit** to send the case opening files.

1. When the debtor information program is complete, and the file has been saved to your computer, this screen displays again.

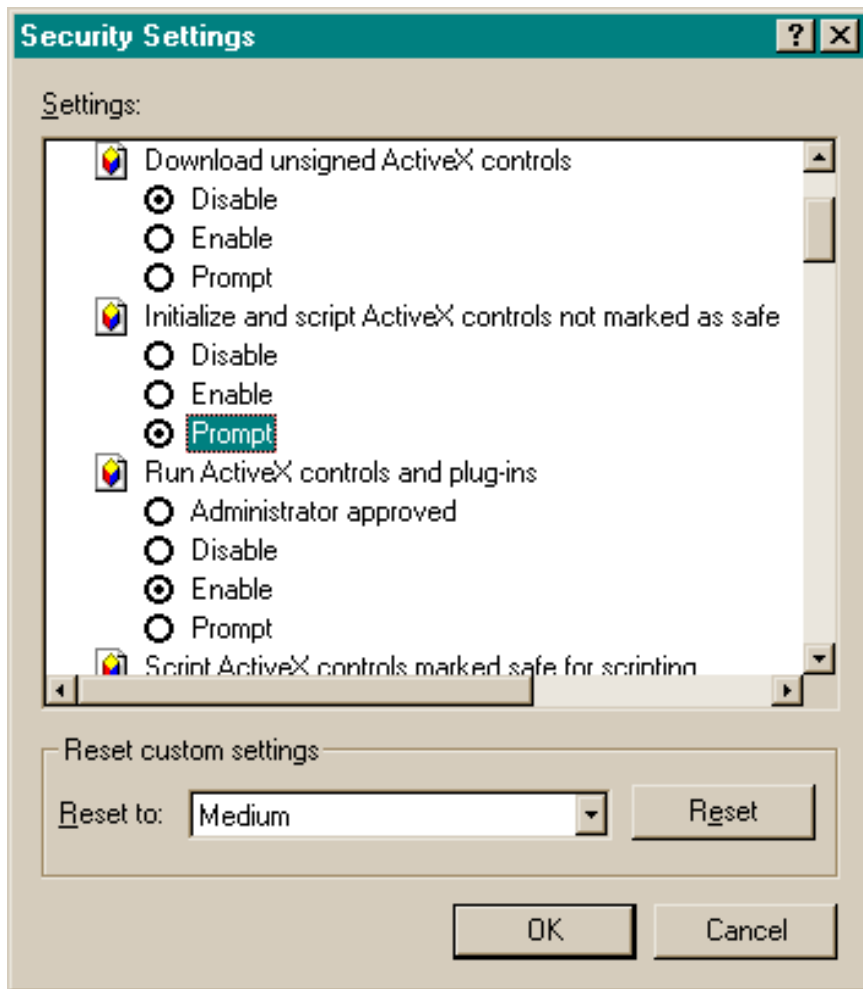2. Click item 3,**Send information to Court**.
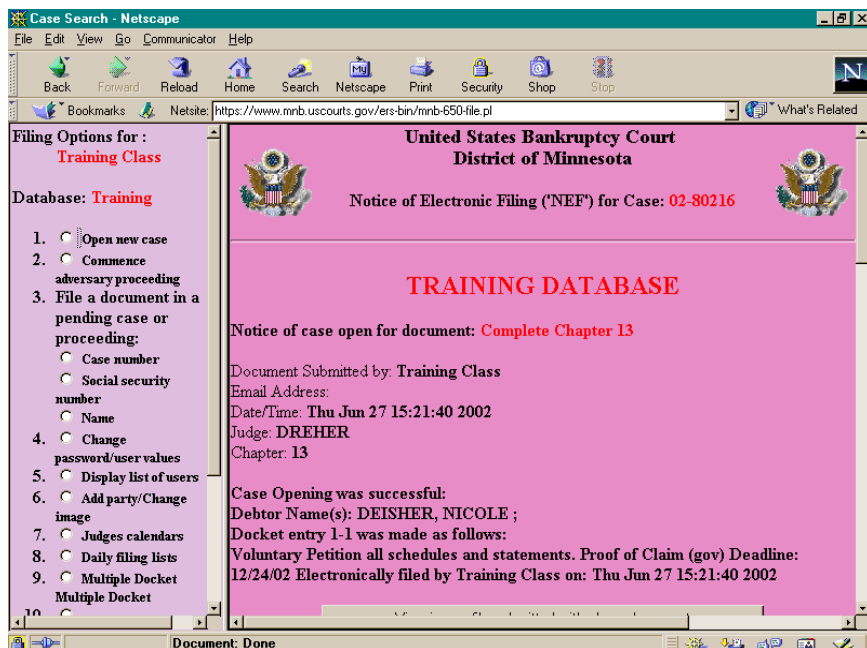
When the case has been opened successfully, this **Notice of Electronic Filing ('NEF')** displays with the following information:

- ✓ case number and name of Judge;

- ✓ name and e-mail address of filer;

- ✓ date and time of filing;

- ✓ the first several docket entries, depending on the type of case;

- ✓ and links to the document images.

The **Notice of Electronic Filing** is a useful screen, and your receipt for the documents you submitted. But the Notice is not an official Court document, and it is not stored anywhere on the Court's computer. For that reason, it is good practice to either print or save the Notice for your files. Print it by clicking the **Print** icon on your browser, or create a PDF file by choosing **File, Print**, and selecting the **Acrobat PDFWriter** as the printer. This serves as written confirmation of the case until you receive the Notice to Creditors, which takes at least a week.

This is especially important for users of Microsoft Internet Explorer! IE sees this notice as something like an information message, and does not store it in your browser's short-term memory. Once you click any arrow or link, this page will be inaccessible. Print or save it *before* you use any of the links or click an arrow. Netscape stores the page temporarily, but it will also be inaccessible after you have visited several pages.

If you fail to print or save this page, you could still confirm the case filing by searching the Internet site for the name of the debtor and printing the docket sheet.

Security Settings `? X`

Settings:

- Download unsigned ActiveX controls
  - ○ Disable
  - ○ Enable
  - ○ Prompt
- Initialize and script ActiveX controls not marked as safe
  - ○ Disable
  - ○ Enable
  - ⦿ Prompt
- Run ActiveX controls and plug-ins
  - ○ Administrator approved
  - ○ Disable
  - ⦿ Enable
  - ○ Prompt
- Script ActiveX controls marked safe for scripting

Reset custom settings

Reset to: Medium ▾   Reset

OK   Cancel

Special Notes to Microsoft Internet Explorer Users

ERS was designed using Netscape, and although many people successfully use Microsoft Internet Explorer to open cases and filed documents, some adjustments are needed when using IE.

✓ Before your personal computer can accept the **Debtor Information File**, you must change IE's security setting. Do that by selecting *Tools* from the IE menu. Select *Internet Options* from the drop-down menu, then select *Security* from the tabs at the top of the screen. Select *Custom Level* at the bottom of the next screen, then scroll down to *Initialize and script ActiveX controls not marked as safe* and select *Prompt*. Click *OK*. The diagram on the preceding page shows the correct setting.

✓ As noted above, IE does not store the receipt notices in memory. Print or save them as soon as you see them.

✓ Because IE handles secured sites differently from Netscape, you may encounter blank screens with "page expired" message. Usually you can refresh the screen to display the page. Occasionally refreshing the screen or clicking back resets your browser to the main case filing page, and you must search for your case again.